

CHOIR NEWS MAY 2014

The ink is hardly dry on my April notes when along comes May and here we go again. Someone once explained to me that time goes faster as you grow older because each incremental minute is proportionately a greater part of the rest of your life. There's a ring of truth about it.

But with no babies or pregnancies to report there is space to tell more about our recent moment of fame, **with a promise that it won't be mentioned again.**

We were very pleased to be featured on Meet My Choir on Radio 3, and on Easter Sunday no less. If you missed it then, it is now available on our YouTube page courtesy of Deb Dobson (soprano) and Cynthia Hall (organist). The link is on the parish website. The BBC wrong footed me with their selection of our music (see Choir News last month), but hey, who really minds?

How Did Radio 3 "Meet My Choir"?

In January Greg Moore and I both spotted that Radio 3's The Choir programme was running a feature called "Meet My Choir". So we identified our USP: singing at cathedrals and went from there. We drafted scripts for the voiceovers and recruited Joy Mackman (soprano) and Kip Manning (tenor) as the main story-tellers. Generally we worked via email, but had one meeting for which Greg came to my house and drank my beer, whilst I maintained my Lenten abstinence.

By mid-March, Radio 3 having already chased us up, Greg recorded Joy and Kip in their homes. I also did a couple of minutes on my mobile phone, so we sent the Beeb eight minutes, in three separate recordings.

Greg keeps a library of all our cathedral music, and from a shortlist he prepared, we submitted the How Responses recorded at St Albans'; Stanford Magnificat in B Flat recorded in Bledlow Church; part of a mass also recorded in Bledlow Church, and two anthems, O Magnum Mysterium recorded at York Minster and Locus Iste, recorded at Great Malvern. The choice of music was ours, but the selection for the broadcast was left with the BBC, although we encouraged them to use the anthems.

Greg sent our files to the Beeb on 24 March along with some explanatory notes.

And the rest is history.

Reflecting on matters afterwards Greg noticed that they had removed all references to Jeff, Cynthia, Bledlow Church and the choir itself, but we agreed that our interviews had been edited sympathetically and in a way that linked well to the Responses and Magnificat. While it was the BBC "what done it" big thanks go to Greg for masterminding this for us and to Kip and Joy who proved to be naturals in front of the microphone. We are also indebted to Gareth Maynard who provided his recordings of items recorded in Bledlow Church.

If you listened to the broadcast, I hope that you enjoyed it.

THE BLEDLOW 100 CLUB

The winner of the April draw was Kerri Byrne, one of our sopranos, who is now £154 richer as a result

Our May draw will be on 15 May when I will be sailing in Scotland, so Derek Stone will do the necessary, and can be blamed if your number is not picked

As always, more next month- but no more about the BBC!!

Mike Beattie
1 May 2014